

Nov. 6, 2015

STATE SURGEON GENERAL CREATES PALLIATIVE CARE AD HOC COMMITTEE



Contact:

Communications Office

NewsMedia@flhealth.gov

850-245-4111

Tallahassee, Fla. — State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong, under the authority established in Section 20.43(6), Florida Statutes, has appointed the Palliative Care Ad Hoc Committee to advise the department and Florida's citizens regarding palliative care services.

This team of experts will provide advice to the department regarding palliative care opportunities available in Florida, with a focus on services for cancer patients. The team will also perform an evaluation of current palliative care initiatives in Florida.

The Palliative Care Ad Hoc Committee members are:

Audrey Brown, president of the Florida Association of Health Plans

Blaine Pitts, M.D., palliative and supportive care, Pediatrics at Orlando Health

Colleen C. Tallen, M.D., medical director of palliative care at Lee Memorial Health System

Deadra Griffeth, R.N., M.A., M.Div., board certified chaplain at Florida Hospital; regional manager of mission and ministry, on ethics and palliative committees, West Florida Region

Gerardo Colon-Otero, M.D., associate professor of medicine, hematology/oncology at Mayo Clinic of Jacksonville

Leonard R. Hock, Jr., D.O., M.A.C.O.I., C.M.D., chair of hospice, Florida Medical Directors Association and chief medical officer, Harbor Palliative Care and Advanced Illness Management of TrustBridge Health

Leslie Gervase, patient care leader at the American Cancer Society

Myriam Rojas, parent

Paul Ledford, president and chief executive officer of Florida Hospice and Palliative Care Association

Seth Berkowitz, M.S.W., senior patient access manager at the Florida Chapter of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society

Suzanne Kelley, BPharm., C.P.H., director of pharmacy services at Covenant Hospice and Florida Pharmacy Association

[Section 20.43\(6\), Florida Statutes](#) establishes the authority for the creation of this committee. The appointments take effect immediately. Members will serve for a term concluding June 30, 2016. All meetings of the committee will be noticed in accordance with Florida law and open to the public.

To see a copy of the creation document establishing this panel please visit <http://www.floridahealth.gov/documents/palliative-committee.pdf>.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.